

F820004-1726



No. 445
AIR MAIL

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

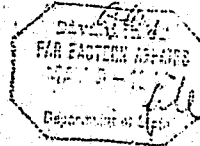
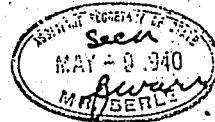
Panama, May 1, 1940

SUBJECT: Activities and Whereabouts of
Dr. Hermann Frederick Erben.

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The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's strictly confidential circular instruction dated February 21, 1940, file No. 130, regarding the activities and whereabouts of Dr. Hermann Frederick Erben, and to transmit the following pertinent part of a report dated April 30, 1940, sent by the Chief, Civil Intelligence Section of The Panama Canal

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AIR MAIL

to the Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York City, on the recent visit of Dr. Erben to Cristobal as ship's surgeon:

"Subject: DR. HERMAN FREDERICK ERBEN;
alias HERMAN F. DURBEN.

"On April 3, 1940, subject arrived at Cristobal, C. Z., as surgeon on the SS PANAMA, Panama Line (U. S. Govt.-owned), having left New York, March 28. On April 6, subject asked a Canal Zone customs official several questions about Army Day, stating he would like to visit some of the Army Day activities at the various posts on the Isthmus and get some pictures. He had in his possession an expensive camera and a package which he declared contained radio tubes which he intended to mail to a cousin in Germany. The SS PANAMA left Cristobal April 7 for New York. When this ship returned to Cristobal on April 24, having left New York on April 18, subject was not on board.

"If your Bureau is able to develop any further information on the activities of this individual in New York, this Section would appreciate receiving information thereon. We will watch for his arrival here in case he returns to the Canal Zone again and will advise you of any additional data obtained."

Respectfully yours,



William Dawson

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